

**ABSTRACT**

A method for preserving fruits, vegetables or mushrooms, comprising: (a) contacting the fruits, vegetables or mushrooms with a first aqueous solution comprising a pH-adjusting agent effective to adjust the pH of the first aqueous solution to about 1.5 to 4.5, wherein the contact between the fruits, vegetables or mushrooms and the first aqueous solution is effective to reduce a microbial concentration on the fruits, vegetables or mushrooms, and (b) contacting the fruits, vegetables or mushrooms with a second aqueous solution comprising a chelating agent and an antioxidant, wherein the second aqueous solution has a pH of about 7.0 to 9.0, wherein the fruits, vegetables or mushrooms are contacted with the second aqueous solution after being contacted with the first aqueous solution.